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WESLEY

AND

EARLY METHODISM:

AN

HISTORICAL TEXT-BOOK

FOR

Church Lyceums and General Students.

BY

ANGELA K. DAVIS.

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PREFACE AND DEDICATION.

THIS little book is affectionately dedicated to the members of the Wesley Literary Circle of St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, Batavia, N. Y., with whom I have enjoyed meeting from week to week for the purpose of studying the Life of Wesley, and the Origin and Growth of Methodism.

To meet our wants from time to time a series of questions and answers was prepared, culled from our standard authors, which, with additions, is now presented in a more permanent form, with the hope that it may be received "with all readiness of mind," and with earnest purpose to search "the Scriptures daily, whether these things [be] so."

As it has been possible in such a small compass to only glance at the more salient points in the development of Methodism,

my devout hope is that this little text-book will be but the beginning of study, a "stepping-stone," creating a desire among the members of the "Circle" to know more of the history of the Church; influencing them to read the works from which it has been chiefly compiled, namely: Porter's "Compendium of Methodism;" Stevens's "History of Methodism;" Watson's "Life of Wesley;" Tyerman's "Life and Times of Wesley;" Daniels's "Illustrated History of Methodism;" Stevens's "Women of Methodism;" and Stevens's "Centenary of American Methodism."

As you become more and more conversant with the polity and usages of our particular branch of the Church, may you strive to emulate the virtues of its founder and his helpers, be made partakers of an inward and vital religion, and thus be brought into closer and closer communion with the great Head of the Church.

ANGELA KIRKHAM DAVIS.

BATAVIA, N. Y., 1883.

"The study of Methodistic history confirms our faith in God's providential regard for, and rule over, our world and our race. To me this lesson is as powerfully taught by it, as by the history of the Jewish nation."—Dr. Thomas Guard.

"Our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are: Repentance, Faith and Holiness. The first we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself."—John Wesley.

WESLEY

AND EARLY METHODISM.

CHAPTER I.

1. *Where and when were John and Charles Wesley born?*

In Epworth, Lincolnshire, England. John in 1703, and Charles, the poet, in 1708.

2. *What is known of the Wesleys' ancestors?*

They were of the highest respectability, in the south of England, and can be traced as far back as the fourteenth century; finding in almost every generation an eminent clergyman and scholar.

3. *Who were their parents?*

Their father was the Rev. Samuel Wesley, rector of Epworth and Wroot about forty years, a man of great practical piety,

and distinguished for the zeal and fidelity with which he discharged his parish duties. He died in 1735, aged seventy-two years. Their mother, Mrs. Susanna Wesley, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Annesley, was educated with great care, being well versed in the Latin, Greek, and French languages; a woman of extraordinary worth, and distinguished for her rare intellectual piety and domestic management. She died in London, in 1742, aged seventy-eight years.

4. *Give some particulars of the Wesley family.*

Rev. Samuel Wesley and Susanna Annesley were married in 1689, he being twenty-seven and she about twenty years old. They had nineteen children, though only ten survived their infancy, three sons and seven daughters growing to maturity. They all possessed unusual talents, and all of the sons became ministers of the Established Church. Dr. Adam Clarke says: "This great family of little children were wonderfully gentle and polite, not only to their

parents and visitors, but to each other and their servants as well, and they had the common fame of being the most loving family in Lincolnshire."

5. *Give some details of their elementary education.*

Each child was taught the Lord's Prayer as soon as it could speak, and repeated it every morning and evening. It was Mrs. Wesley's custom to begin their secular education at five years old, and from this time they studied regularly in the family school. They were taught the letters of the alphabet in one day, a task which all of them accomplished except two daughters, who were a day and a half. One of the daughters was able to read the New Testament in Greek when she was eight years old. Six hours a day were spent in school, it being opened and closed with singing a psalm; and in addition to this, after school, the oldest took the youngest that could speak, and the second the next, to whom they read the psalm for the day and a chap-

ter in the New Testament. Mrs. Wesley herself also conversed each evening with one of her children on religious subjects, and on some evenings with two, so as to talk with each one once a week. Notwithstanding their poverty and other depressing circumstances, she kept herself so far in advance of her college-bred sons, especially in things pertaining to the word and kingdom of God, that for years she was their acknowledged spiritual counselor and guide. Among other helpful things she wrote for them some most admirable expositions of Scripture and of portions of the Common Prayer.* John Wesley, "who became distinguished for his almost inimitable skill as a logician, who could win a victory in a debate with fewer words and in better temper than any other man of his time, must have inherited this logical power and this amiable sharpness from his admirable mother." The Epworth rectory presents the pict-

* For a very interesting account of Mrs. Susanna Wesley, see "The Women of Methodism," by Dr. A. Stevens.

ure of a domestic Church, a family school, and a genuine old English household.

6. *What remarkable incident occurred in John Wesley's life at six years of age?*

In consequence of some political disturbance, the rectory was set on fire in the dead of a winter's night. The father was awakened by the fire coming into his chamber, through the thatched roof, and hastily arousing his family, they fled down stairs, and with great difficulty escaped with their lives. But little John was missing. The frantic father tried several times to pass up the stairs to rescue him, but in vain. He returned in despair, and kneeling down, committed the soul of his child to God, when suddenly he appeared, crying for help, at the window of his chamber, beneath which two peasants placed themselves, one on the shoulders of the other, and saved him, the moment the blazing mass of the roof fell in. "Come, neighbors," his father exclaimed, as he received his son, "let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God!

he has given me all my eight children; let the house go; I am rich enough."

7. *How did this affect John Wesley's mother?*

She felt as if she ought to devote herself with special care to the training of this son. In her private Journal these words are found: "I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that Thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been; that I may do my endeavor to instill into his mind the principles of true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success."

8. *For what was John Wesley remarkable in early childhood?*

For his sober and studious disposition, seeming to feel himself answerable to his reason and his conscience for every act, doing nothing without first reflecting on its fitness and propriety. Such was his consistency of conduct that his father admit-

ted him to the communion table when he was only eight years old.

9. *In what school was he placed at eleven years of age?*

He passed from under the tutelage of his accomplished mother and became a pupil at the Charter-House School,* London, under that eminent scholar, Dr. Walker. Here, notwithstanding he had to suffer many hardships and privations, and endure wrongs and insults, he was noticed for his diligence and progress in learning. But though he was only sixteen years of age when he left, he had, by his energy of character, his unconquerable patience, and his assiduity, become a favorite with the master and acquired a high position among his fellows.

* At this school forty-two boys, as charity scholars, were to be maintained. The allowance from the endowment to each scholar was forty pounds a year. It was no small piece of good fortune to the Epworth rector to secure one of these scholarships for his son John, for which they were indebted to the friendly services of the Duke of Buckingham, at that time Lord Chamberlain of the royal household.

10. *Did he retain the religious traits which had marked his character from the days of infancy?*

Mr. Wesley writes in his Journal concerning this period of his history: "Outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures and said my prayers morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by was, first, not being so bad as other people; second, having still a kindness for religion; and, third, reading the Bible, going to Church, and saying my prayers."

11. *What happened to him when he was seventeen years of age?*

1720. He was admitted to Christ Church, Oxford, one of the noblest colleges in that illustrious seat of learning, and remained there five years. He was placed under the care of Dr. Wigan, a gentlemen of great

classical knowledge, and pursued his studies with much energy. The excellent use he had made of his time at the Charter-House, gained for him a high position at Oxford, and he soon became quite famous for his learning in the classics, and especially for his skill in logic.

12. *What does Mr. Babcock say of him when he was twenty-one years old?*

"He was a sensible and acute theologian, a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments." His perfect knowledge of the classics gave a smooth polish to his wit, and an air of superior elegance to all his compositions.

13. *What did Mrs. Wesley write to her sons while they were at Oxford?*

"Now, in good earnest, resolve to make religion the business of your life; for, after all, that is the one thing that, strictly speaking, is necessary. All things besides are comparatively little to the purposes of life. I heartily wish you would now enter upon a strict examination of yourself, that you

may know whether you have a reasonable hope of salvation by Jesus Christ. If you have it, the satisfacion of knowing it will abundantly reward your pains; if you have it not, you will find a more reasonable occasion for tears than can be met with in any tragedy."

14. *When purposing to take deacon's orders, what did he do?*

He was aroused from the religious carelessness into which he had fallen at college, and applied himself diligently to the reading of divinity.

15. *What books now occupied his attention?*

"The Imitation of Christ," by Kempis, and Bishop Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living and Dying," among the most spiritual and heart-searching books of the age. These made a deep impression and aroused his whole soul to the subject. They seem to have been the first books on practical divinity he had read, and to the day of his death were held in high esteem. If Kem-

pis and Taylor were right, he was wrong. In his extremity, like a true son, not spoiled by a college course, he wrote to his parents, stating his difficulties, and received very able and interesting responses from each of them.

16. *What was the result of his reading Thomas à Kempis's "Christian Pattern?"*

To this incident we are indebted for Wesley's long-continued record of the events and exercises of his daily life, as he began to take a more exact account of the manner wherein he spent his time, writing down how he employed every hour, thus giving to the world one of the most interesting works in the English language.

17. *What was another and far more important result of reading Kempis and Taylor?*

1725. An entire change of life. He says in reference to Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying:" "In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected with that part in particular which relates to *purity*

of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate *all* my life to God—all my thoughts, and words, and actions—being thoroughly convinced that there is no *medium*, but that every part of my life must either be a sacrifice to *God*, or to *myself;* that is, in effect, to the devil."

18. *Did this seem to be a turning-point in Wesley's life?*

Yes; although it was not until thirteen years after this that he received the consciousness of being saved through faith in Christ. But from this time his whole aim was to serve God, and to get safe to heaven. No man could have been more sincere, earnest, devout, diligent, and self-denying; and yet, during this long period, he lived and labored in a mist.

CHAPTER. II.

1. *When was John Wesley ordained deacon in the Established Church?*

Having prepared himself with the most conscientious care for the ministerial office, he was ordained deacon on Sunday, September 19, 1725.

2. *What noted infidel was contemporaneous with Wesley?*

It is rather a remarkable circumstance that just about the time of Wesley's ordination Voltaire was expelled from France, and fled to England; and during a long life he and Wesley were contemporaneous.

3. *Give Tyerman's graphic description in the "Life and Times of Wesley," of the two men.*

"Perhaps of all the men then living none exercised so great an influence as the

restless philosopher, and the unwearied minister of Christ. No men, however, could be more dissimilar. Wesley, in person, was beautiful; Voltaire was of a physiognomy so strange, and lighted up with fire so half-hellish and half-heavenly, that it was hard to say whether it was the face of a satyr or a man. Wesley's heart was filled with a world-wide benevolence; Voltaire, though of a gigantic mind, scarcely had a heart at all—an incarnation of avaricious meanness, and a victim to petty passions. Wesley was the friend of all and the enemy of none; Voltaire was too selfish to love, and when forced to pay the scanty and ill-tempered homage, which he sometimes rendered, it was always offered at the shrine of rank and wealth. Wesley had myriads who loved him; Voltaire had numerous admirers, but probably not a friend. Both were men of ceaseless labor, and almost unequaled authors; but while the one filled the land with blessings, the other, by his sneering and mendacious attacks against revealed relig-

ion, inflicted a greater curse than has been inflicted by the writings of any other author either before or since. The evangelist is now esteemed by all whose good opinions are worth having; the philosopher is only remembered to be branded with well-merited reproach and shame."

4. *Where did Wesley preach his first sermon?*

In a small village, called South Leigh, in 1726. Forty-six years afterward he preached in the same place, when there was one man present who had been a member of his first congregation.

5. *What did he succeed in obtaining in* 1726?

One of the twelve fellowships of Lincoln College, one of the smallest, poorest, and most scholarly of the nineteen colleges which are comprised in the University of Oxford. This permitted him to devote his life to the duties of a Christian minister and scholar. The room occupied by him is still called Wesley's room, and a vine

creeping around its window is called Wesley's vine.

6. *What degree did he take in* 1727?

That of Master of Arts, having already been chosen as "Lecturer in Greek, and Moderator of the Classes." His position as Greek lecturer attracted to him persons who, like himself, read the Greek Testament for devotion, as well as a number of private pupils, who sought his assistance. In Hebrew he was one of the best scholars of his time. It is evident Wesley was a distinguished scholar at Oxford, and had won all these scholastic honors before he was twenty-five years old.

7. *What was his plan of study when he was twenty-four years old?*

Mondays and Tuesdays he devoted to the Greek and Roman classics, historians, and poets; Wednesdays to logic and ethics; Thursdays to Hebrew and Arabic; Fridays to metaphysics and natural philosophy; Saturdays to oratory and poetry, chiefly composing; and Sundays to divinity. In

intermediate hours, he perfected himself in the French language; sometimes amused himself with experiments in optics and in mathematics, studied Euclid, Keil, and Sir Isaac Newton.

8. *What was his manner of reading?*

First, he read an author regularly through, and then transcribed, in a commonplace book, such passages as he thought important or beautiful. In this way he greatly increased his stock of knowledge and inured himself to hard working.

9. *What books were put into his hands at this time, and of what was he convinced?*

Law's "Christian Perfection," and "Serious Call." He was more convinced than ever of the absolute impossibility of being *half* a Christian, and he determined, through his grace, to be all devoted to God, to give him his soul, body, and substance. He not only *read*, but *studied*, the Bible as the one, the only standard of truth and the only model of pure religion.

10. *Why did he return to Lincolnshire at this time?*

His father, being advanced in years, invited him to become his curate at Epworth and Wroote. He remained here about two years, dividing his time between Oxford and Epworth, and pursuing his studies in practical divinity with his mother.

11. *When and by whom was he ordained priest in the Established Church?*

In 1728, by Bishop Potter, of Oxford, a man of great talent and learning, a high-churchman, who maintained that episcopacy was of divine institution, and yet one who cherished a friendly feeling toward the first Methodists, saying, concerning them, "These gentleman are irregular; but they have done good; and I pray God to bless them."

12. *What advice did the Bishop give Mr. Wesley, for which he was always thankful?*

That if he wished to be extensively useful, he must not spend his time in contend-

ing for or against things of a disputable nature, but in testifying against notorious vice, and in promoting real, essential holiness.

13. *Did Mr. Wesley remain long in Epworth?*

No, he returned to Oxford, at the call of the rector of his college, and, besides attending to the duties of his office, became tutor to various pupils placed under his care and labored assiduously for their welfare.

14. *What remarkable expertness did he acquire while in Lincoln College?*

1729. Presiding as moderator in the disputations, six of which were held weekly, he acquired the remarkable expertness in arguing, and in discerning and pointing out well-concealed and plausible fallacies, which distinguished him to the end of life.

15. *Upon his return to Oxford, what did he find his brother Charles doing?*

In 1729, standing vigorously against the

tide of infidelity which was setting in upon the students on all sides.

16. *What had he organized while his brother was at Epworth?*

Charles and a few friends had organized a "Holy Club," for mutual assistance both in scholarship and in piety. For the improvement of their minds they agreed to spend a few evenings in the week together in reading the Greek Testament, Greek and Latin classics, and, on Sunday evenings, divinity. For the improvement of their souls they adopted a set of rules for holy living, including the exact observance of all the duties set forth in the Prayer Book of the English Church, fasting Wednesday and Friday of each week, and observing the weekly sacrament.

17. *What else did they do besides having frequent meetings for study and devotional exercises?*

They began a systematic visitation of the poor and sick, devoting certain hours to the instruction of children, and extended

their charity to the poor debtors in Bocardo. *

18. *Why did their conduct attract attention?*

Because religion was in such a low state, there being little of it in the community, except the form, and scarcely enough of that to meet the claims of municipal law or the rules of the University. The Church of England, at that time, like that of Laodicea, though proud of its traditions, its wealth, and its power, "was wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." The masses were so sunk in ignorance and atheism, that they hardly knew, or boldly denied, that they had any souls to save. Of the prominent statesmen of the time,

* This Bocardo was a room in use, at that time, as the debtors' prison at Oxford. It was at this place that Archbishop Cranmer was led forth to martyrdom, in 1656, after having been taken up to the top of the tower of St. Michael's Church, adjoining the prison, to witness the burning of Ridley and Latimer, in order that the sight of their sufferings might move him to recant.

the greater part were unbelievers in any form of Christianity and distinguished for their grossness and the immorality of their lives.

19. *Were there no faithful servants of the Lord left?*

Yes, there were a few noble and grand exceptions, both among the clergy of the Establishment and the ministry of the Nonconformist Churches. But Rev. Augustus Toplady, a minister of the Church of England, who died in 1778, said, in a sermon not long before his death: "I believe that no denomination of professing Christians, the Church of Rome excepted, was so generally void of the light and life of godliness, so generally destitute of the doctrine and of the grace of the Gospel, as was the Church of England, considered as a body, about fifty years ago. At that period a *converted minister* in the Establishment was as great a wonder as a comet."

20. *What was the spiritual condition of*

the Dissenters—that is, the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists?

Though less conformed to this world, they were constrained to mourn over the wastes in Zion. Many of their ministers were immoral and negligent of their duty, spending their time in sports and revels, or in scrambling for the best-paying pastorates in their respective Churches, with much of the same spirit as that which they so bitterly denounced in the clergy of the Established Church.

21. *Who were raised up in the midst of this spiritual darkness?*

God raised up a Bishop—John Wesley, one of the greatest religious legislators of history. A Preacher—George Whitefield, the greatest pulpit orator of the age, or of any age. A Poet—Charles Wesley, a hymnist whose supremacy has been but doubtfully disputed by a single rival. Three men whose equals have probably never been seen in the world at once since the apostolic days.

22. *What were the members of the Holy Club called?*

Methodists, in allusion to the exact and methodical manner in which they performed their various engagements.

23. *How did it affect them to be called Methodists?*

Taking no offense at any thing, and seeing that their new name expressed in a word exactly what they would be in life and godliness, they accepted it in all cheerfulness, as their successors have done, hoping never to dishonor it.

24. *What is said of this little company, and what truth did it illustrate?*

It is full of interest, being a checkered page, showing the enmity of the carnal mind, and illustrating the truth of the declaration, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" but not more fully than it confirms the encouraging announcement of the Holy Spirit, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoic-

ing, bringing his sheaves with him." The conflict was severe, but they succeeded. Many were benefited by their endeavors, and they received a hundred-fold in discipline for the more difficult achievements of coming days.*

25. *What parish was offered Mr. Wesley at this time, and why did he not accept?*

His father, now getting old, was very anxious his son should succeed him in the Epworth rectorship. But, as he was the master spirit of the "Holy Club," his absence from Oxford for a few weeks was attended with serious consequences, which compelled him to see the importance of his presence; consequently his sense of duty required him to refuse his father's offer and still cleave to his pupils and the little society with which he was surrounded.

*For interesting details of the "Holy Club," see Tyerman's "Life and Times of John Wesley," vol. i.

CHAPTER III.

1. *What appointment was offered Wesley* in 1735?

General Oglethorpe, whom Wesley met in London about this time, strongly urged him to undertake a mission to the infant colony of Georgia.

2. *In advising with his mother, (his father had died but a few months before,) what answer did she give him, and what was the result?*

She answered in these memorable words: "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." After mature deliberation he concluded to accept the position.

3. *Under whose auspices did he go, and who accompanied him?*

He was sent out by the English "Society

for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts,"* as a kind of missionary chaplain, at a salary of fifty pounds a year. He was accompanied by his brother Charles, and two other young men.

4. *What of their success, and how long did they remain in America?*

They were not as successful as they anticipated, particularly among the Indians, and their conflicts and sufferings were great. They only remained about two years, and returned to England.

5. *What was Mr. Wesley's religious experience at this time?*

Anxious as he had been to be wholly the Lord's, profound as he was in divinity, and scrupulously as he had lived in all godliness and honesty, yet he was ignorant and inexperienced in justification by faith and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. He had worked and suffered for salvation, but had not believed with a heart unto righteousness. He

*For an interesting account of this Society, see Tyerman, vol. i.

hoped that he was a Christian, but had no *joyful assurance* of it, and, therefore, was more of a *servant* than a *son* of God, and was influenced more by *fear* than love.

6. *What incidents happened on his voyage to Georgia that revealed to Mr. Wesley his spiritual condition?*

The conduct of twenty-six German Moravians who were on board the vessel, the existence of fear in his own heart, and the exhibition of peculiar graces in the Moravians, gave him much trouble. He particularly noticed their acts of kindness toward the other passengers, giving continual proofs of their humility by performing servile offices, which none of the English would undertake, desiring and receiving no pay. If they were ridiculed, pushed, struck, or thrown down, there was no complaint made, seeming to be delivered from the spirit of pride, anger, and revenge. An incident happened which showed that they were also delivered from the spirit of fear. On one occasion the ship encountered a storm, the

winds roared, and the ship rocked to and fro with the utmost violence; just as the Moravians were beginning their evening service, as usual, singing a psalm of praise, the sea broke over, split the mainsail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed them up. A great screaming began among the English, but the Germans calmly sung on. Afterward Mr. Wesley asked them if they were not afraid. "I thank God, no," was the reply. "But," he asked, "were not your women and children afraid?" "No; our women and children are not afraid to die."

7. *What facts indicated the remarkable powers of mind possessed by Mr. Wesley?*

While on shipboard he commenced the study of the German language, that he might converse with and preach to the Germans, and when he reached Savannah he found Frenchmen, Italians, and also Spanish Jews, to whom he learned to preach in their own language.

8. *How does Mr. Wesley state, in his Journal, the result of his study and observation on his own heart during his absence?*

January 8, 1738, he wrote: "By the most infallible of proofs, inward feeling, I am convinced, 1st. Of unbelief; having no such faith in Christ as will prevent my heart from being troubled. 2d. Of pride, throughout my past life; inasmuch as I thought I had, what I find I have not. 3d. Of gross irrecollection; inasmuch as in a storm I cry to God every moment, in a calm not. 4th. Of levity and luxuriancy of spirit; appearing by my speaking words not tending to edify; but most by the manner of my speaking of my enemies. Lord, save, or I perish!"

9. *How did he want to be saved?*

"Save me, 1st. By such a faith as implies peace in life and death. 2d. By such humility as may fill my heart from this hour forever with a piercing, uninterrupted sense that hitherto I have done nothing. 3d. By

such a recollection as may enable me to cry to thee every moment. 4th. By steadiness, seriousness, sobriety of spirits, avoiding, as fire, every word that tendeth not to edify, and never speaking of any who oppose me, or sin against God, without all my own sins set in array before my face."

10. *On arriving home from America, and reviewing his own religious life, in comparison with that of his German friends, what did he write again?*

"And now, it is upward of two years since I left my own country, to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity, but I have learned that I, who went to America to convert others, was never converted myself; that I am 'fallen short of the glory of God;' that my whole heart is 'altogether corrupt and abominable;' that, having the sentence of death in my heart, and having nothing in or of myself to plead, I have no hope but that of being justified freely 'through the redemption that is in Jesus;' I have no hope but that if I seek,

I shall find the Christ, and 'be found in him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is of God by faith.'"

11. *If it be said he had faith, what was his answer?*

"So have the devils a *sort* of *faith;* but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. So the apostles had, even at Cana in Galilee, when Jesus first 'manifested forth his glory;' even then they, in a sort, 'believed on Him;' but they had not then 'the faith that overcometh the world.'"

12. *What kind of faith did he want?*

"The faith I want is a sure trust and confidence in God that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favor of God. I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the Romans: that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out, 'I live not; but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

I want that faith that frees from fear and doubt; having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God; having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost, which is given unto him; which Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God."

13. *With whom did Mr. Wesley advise at this time?*

With Count Zinzendorf, the founder and protector of the Moravian Society, and Peter Bohler, another pious Moravian.

14. *What did Peter Bohler tell him?*

That true faith in Christ was inseparably attended by, 1st, dominion over sin; and, 2d, constant peace, arising from a sense of forgiveness. He also told him that this saving faith in Christ is given in a moment, and that in an instant a man is turned from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost.

15. *How did these doctrines affect him?*

He was amazed, and said that if this was

so, it was clear that he was without true faith in Christ, because he was without its inseparable fruits. But in searching the Scriptures he found that both doctrines were true, for, to his utter astonishment, he found there were scarcely any instances of other than instantaneous conversions. He could now only cry out, "Lord, help thou my unbelief." He was now thoroughly convinced and, by the grace of God, resolved to seek this faith unto the end.

16. *Why was it difficult for him to yield, and what sentiment, generally discarded by the Church, gave him trouble?*

His mental structure, education, and religious notions made it difficult to come to the point of depending on nothing but Christ, and on him now, for salvation, as instantaneous conversion was generally discarded by the Established Church.

17. *What did he think of doing, and what advice did his friend Bohler give him?*

Wesley thought that, being without faith, he ought to stop preaching. But Bohler

said, "By no means. Preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it, you will preach it."

18. *What did Mr. Wesley now do?*

He consecrated himself entirely to the work, and by labors and watching and tears, such as alarmed his friends, he spread the truth of what he believed to be the power of God unto salvation.

19. *Give an account of the greatest event of his history?*

Though he had not yet realized the fullness of what he was urging upon the acceptance of others, he was still panting after it. May 24, 1738, about five in the morning, he opened his Testament on these words: There "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter i, 4.) Just as he went out he opened it again, on these words: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." In the afternoon he was asked to go to St. Paul's Cathedral. The Anthem, "Out of the deep

have I called unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice," etc., was full of comfort to him. In the evening he went to one of the social religious assemblies of the Moravians, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, in which Luther teaches what faith is, and also that faith alone justifies. Wesley says, "About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart, through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he hath taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

20. *What did he begin to do?*

To pray with all his might for those who had, in an especial manner, despitefully used and persecuted him, and testified openly to all there what he then first felt in his heart.

21. *State the contrast between his present and past experience?*

For ten years he had believed in Christ,

but never believed as he did now. He had been intensely pious; but now he possessed power over himself and sin, which he had not possessed before. He had practiced religion; but now he experienced its bliss. He had been seeking to establish his own righteousness, instead of submitting to the righteousness of Christ, which is by faith. He had been as a servant of God, and was accepted of him, but now, "the Spirit bore witness with his spirit, that he was a child of God," and there was sunshine in his soul. After ten years of earnest prayer, rigorous fasting, and self-sacrificing piety, he was now brought into the blissful enjoyment of a conscious salvation, and the severe ascetic was turned into a joyful saint.

22. *After this did he have any struggles with doubt?*

Yes, he was much buffeted with manifold temptations, which returned again and again. But in the midst of all he kept waiting upon God continually, read the New Testament, conquered temptations, proceeded

from "strength to strength," till he could say, "Now, I was always conqueror." His experience, nurtured by habitual prayer, and deepened by unwearied exertion in the cause of his Saviour, settled into that steadfast faith and solid peace which the grace of God perfected in him to the close of his long and active life.

23. *What was indispensable for him, and what did this revelation of God to his soul enable him to do?*

This was the crisis to which God had been drawing him for years. It was indispensable for him to know the things whereof he affirmed. This revelation assured him that what he had believed was the truth as it is in Jesus, and enabled him to declare it with a degree of confidence he had never done before.

24. *What did it reveal to him, and what power did it give him?*

It revealed the nature and evidences of religion with the clearness of light, and gave him the power of patient endurance in well-

doing that was necessary to the position he was to occupy.

25. *What was the result of this?*

The line between the Wesleys and other clergymen was distinctly drawn, the point of attainment in religious experience defined, and the standard of genuine religion established. Following the instincts of their new state, no less than the dictates of a sound policy, they, with other witnesses to the truth of instantaneous justification by faith, organized themselves into a society for mutual improvement.

26. *What does Mr. Wesley say with regard to the origin of Methodism?*

He refers it to three distinct periods. He says: "The first rise of Methodism was in November, 1729, when four of us met at Oxford. The second was at Savannah, in April, 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house. The last was at London, May 1, 1738, when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to free conversation, begun

and ended with singing and prayer. God then thrust us out to raise a holy people."[2]

27. *How has Methodism been described?*

As a revival Church in its spirit, a missionary Church in its organization, a resuscitation of the spiritual life and practical aims of primitive Christianity.

CHAPTER IV.

1. *What were the two celebrated sermons Mr. Wesley preached soon after his conversion?*

He went to Oxford and preached before the University his celebrated sermon on the text, "By grace are ye saved through faith." The same year he published another sermon, "On God's Free Grace," in which he gave equal prominence to another great Bible truth, namely, that the grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is free in all, and free for all.

2. *In defense of himself, as a good Churchman, what did he issue?*

A pamphlet of sixteen pages, entitled "The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works; extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England."

3. *What did it show with regard to the doctrine of that Church?*

That the sinner is justified by faith only; and yet this faith does not exclude repentance, hope, love, and fear of God; but shuts them out from the office of justifying. Neither does faith shut out good works, necessary to be done afterward; but we are not to do them with the intent of being justified by doing them. He further shows that "justification is the office of God only—a blessing which we receive of him, by his free mercy, through the only merits of his beloved Son." He adds, "The right and true Christian faith is not only to believe that Holy Scripture and the articles of our faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ; whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments. He maintains further that, without this true saving faith, the works we do cannot be good and acceptable in the sight of God."

4. *To what did the preaching of these doctrines give birth?*

To the greatest revival of religion chronicled in the history of the Church of Christ. From such doctrines Wesley never wavered. "They are essentially and vitally connected with man's salvation both here and hereafter."

5. *Whom did Mr. Wesley visit about three weeks after his conversion?*

He spent about three months with the Moravians, in Germany, to whom he was much indebted; while his brother Charles contended earnestly for the faith among formalists at home.

6. *On his return to London, what did he do?*

"I began," he says, "to declare in my own country the glad tidings of salvation, preaching three times, and afterward expounding to a large company in the Minories, the next day after my arrival. On Monday I met with the Moravian Society at Fetter Lane, which had increased from ten mem-

bers to thirty-two; and on Tuesday I went to the condemned felons in Newgate, and preached to them a free salvation, and in the evening I went to a society in Bear Yard, and preached repentance and remission of sins."

7. *How were the Wesleys regarded at this time?*

They were now objects of especial attention. Before this they had been considered as over-righteous, and now they were supposed to be crazy; and the more so, because they professed to have demonstrated the truth of their doctrines by a joyful experience in their own souls.

8. *How did this affect them, and what of their success in preaching?*

Nothing moved them, and they were successful in bringing others into the same blessed state. Their word was accompanied by divine power. The utterance of a few simple truths, whether from the Bible or personal experience, was like fire, "and like a hammer that breaketh the rock to pieces."

Professional men, full of pride and conceit, became as little children.

9. *Were they allowed to preach in the churches?*

No. At the close of the year 1738 they were almost uniformly excluded from the pulpits of the Established Church. They, therefore, preached, as the providence of God opened the way, in prisons, fields, and highways, thus attracting thousands to hear the Gospel. At first Mr. Wesley hesitated at this seeming irregularity, but when he came to consider the example of Christ, and that He was excluded from the churches, he says, "I submitted to be yet more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation."

10. *Where did he first preach out of doors?*

From a little eminence in a ground adjoining the city of Bristol, to about three thousand people, taking for his text Isaiah lxi, 1, 2, which was both appropriate and striking.

11. *When he was questioned as to his good faith in holding out-of-door services without the consent of the local clergy, what was his reply?*

He replied, "Permit me to speak plainly. On scriptural principles I do not think it hard to justify whatever I do. God in Scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, to do it at all, seeing I have no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Whom, then, shall I hear, God or man? 'If it be just to obey man, rather than God, judge you.' A dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me; and woe is me if I preach not the Gospel. Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish."

12. *Why did it seem that God approved of this method?*

By the fruits. Their congregations were estimated at twenty, forty, sometimes fifty

thousand. Many who had set all laws at defiance, human and divine, and were utterly without God in the world, were pricked in their hearts, and, with cries and tears, exclaimed, in the bitterness of their soul, "What must I do to be saved?" Many of these were soon 'filled with peace and joy in believing,' and evidenced that the work was really of God, by holy, happy, and unblamable walking before Him. Blasphemies were now turned to praise, and the voice of joy and gladness was found where wickedness and misery reigned before.

13. *What was the result of this new measure?*

The lowest masses of the neglected people were thus invaded by the Gospel; hundreds and thousands were reclaimed to virtue and piety; and "Societies" were formed, in order to bring the numerous converts into relations of Christian communion and discipline.

14. *With what difficulty did they meet, and what did this suggest?*

They could not find a place large enough

to meet in; this suggested the idea of building a room or a house large enough to accommodate those who wished to be present at the preaching, as well as at the society meetings. The corner-stone of the first Methodist meeting-house the world ever saw was laid in Bristol, on Saturday, May, 12, 1739, with prayer and songs of praise. It was not dignified by the name of "church," or even chapel, but was simply called "The Preaching-house." In November, of the same year, the "Foundry," in London, was consecrated.

15. *Give an account of the old Foundry?*

It was the first Methodist preaching-house in London. In November, 1739, Mr. Wesley was invited by two gentlemen, who were strangers to him, to preach in an unused and dilapidated building in London, near the Moorfields. He accepted the invitation, and on Sunday, Nov. 11, he preached, at eight o'clock in the morning, to about five thousand persons, and at five o'clock in the evening there were seven or eight thousand

present. The place had been used as a government foundry, for the casting of cannon, but more than twenty years before this a terrible explosion had occurred, which blew off the roof and otherwise injured the building, killing and wounding a considerable number of workmen. This accident led to the abandonment of the old foundry, which Mr. Wesley purchased, made the necessary repairs, divided it into a chapel, (which would accommodate about fifteen hundred people,) preachers' house, school and band room. A bell * was hung in a plain belfry, and was rung every morning at five o'clock for early service, and every evening at nine for family worship, as well as at sundry other times. This was really the cradle of London Methodism. Here Wesley began to

*A few years ago the old Foundry bell, used in calling the people to the five o'clock preaching, was still in existence, and was attached to the school at Friar's Mount, London. The old Foundry pulpit is preserved at Richmond, and is used by the Richmond students every week, and the old Foundry chandelier is now in use in the chapel at Bowes, in Yorkshire.—*Tyerman*, vol. i, p. 273.

preach at the close of the year 1739. His constant theme was salvation by faith, preceded by repentance, and followed by holiness. The place was rough and the people poor; but the service, simple, scriptural, beautiful.

16. *What is said of the progress of this work of God?*

It spread in every direction, triumphing over the prejudices and opposition of men of various ranks and conditions; societies were formed in many places; drunkards, swearers, thieves, adulterers, were brought from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Many, who had not so much as a rational faith, being Jews, Arians, Deists, or Atheists, were made partakers of an inward, vital religion, even righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.

17. *What extraordinary circumstances occurred, and what seems to have been the design?*

The manner wherein God wrought this

work is as strange as the work itself, and equally remote from what human wisdom would have expected. In any particular soul generally, if not always, it was wrought in one moment, and often these conversions were attended with remarkable physical demonstrations. These circumstances seem to have been designed by God for the further manifestation of his work, to cause his power to be known, and to awaken the attention of a drowsy world.

18. *Were these demonstrations peculiar to the Methodists?*

No. The great Methodist revival of religion stood not alone, for God, in his sovereign mercy, was performing works quite as great in Germany, America, and Scotland. In America, under Rev. Jonathan Edwards, in 1729, where in "many instances conviction of sin and conversion were attended with intense physical excitement." Scenes of mercy were witnessed in Scotland and in Germany quite as striking as those which were occurring in England and in America,

exhibiting the same physical affections. It is also a significant fact that all these great revivals were begun by preaching the same kind of truth, the doctrine of salvation by simple faith in Christ.

19. *Through whom did the Society in London fall into dangerous errors, and to what did this lead?*

1739. The Moravians, with whom they were intimately connected. The points of difference were ably discussed, which finally led to the division of the Society, and the separation of Mr. Wesley, as well as eighteen or nineteen others, from the Moravians. Wesley took down their names, and met them every Thursday evening, for spiritual advice and prayer. Soon after they met at the chapel in Moorfields, or "The Foundry," Mr. Wesley having the Society under his pastoral care.

20. *Of what did this suggest the importance?*

These differences, together with the multiplication of Societies, suggested the impor-

tance of having some definite bases of union; which, while it should invite all serious persons to the highest privileges of the Gospel, would authorize the pastors of the flock to eject such from their fellowship as should prove themselves unworthy of confidence.

21. *How was this necessity supplied?*

1742. By the adoption of that most excellent code in our Discipline, called "The General Rules of our United Societies."

22. *Give Mr. Wesley's views of a Methodist, published in a tract in* 1739.

He says: "A Methodist is one who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him; one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. He rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, and in every thing gives thanks. His heart is full of love to all mankind, and is purified from envy, malice, wrath, and every unkind and malign affection. His one desire and the one design of his life is not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him.

He keeps not only some or most of God's commandments, but all, from the least to the greatest. He follows not the customs of the world; for vice does not lose its nature from its becoming fashionable. He fares not sumptuously every day. He cannot lay up treasures upon earth, any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot adorn himself, on any pretense, with gold or costly apparel. He cannot join in any diversion that has the least tendency to vice. He cannot speak evil of his neighbor, no more than he can tell a lie. He cannot utter unkind or idle words. No corrupt communication ever comes out of his mouth. He does good unto all men: unto neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies."

CHAPTER V.

1. *What occurrence, in* 1741, *cast a shadow over the prospects of the new Society?*

Mr. Whitefield's departure from the faith. His having adopted the Calvinistic view of the atonement led to a debate, alienation, and, at last, separation.

2. *To meet this emergency, what did Mr. Wesley do?*

Printed a sermon on "Predestination or Free Grace," showing the absurdity of the particular views of the Calvinists, which gave offense and led to the separation of the two parties. This was the origin of the Calvinistic Methodists.

3. *After this, how did Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield regard each other?*

Although they separated, they still loved each other, as was shown by their preaching in each other's chapels, and also by

Mr. Whitefield bequeathing a mourning ring to the brothers, and requesting Mr. Wesley to preach his funeral sermon, should he die first, which he did, and thus gave full proof of a profound love for Mr. Whitefield.

4. *At this time what necessity was to be provided for, and what was Mr. Wesley's desire?*

The work increased so wonderfully—there was a great demand for laborers. Mr. Wesley desired that the ministers of the Established Church should look after those who were converted; encourage them in faith and practice, as their spiritual interest required.

5. *Did the clergy do this?*

No. And so far from encouraging them, they swelled the tide of opposition against them, by ridiculing their religion, repelling them from the Lord's table, hindering rather than helping. The result was that many turned back to the world and plunged into sin.

6. *How did Mr. Wesley meet this difficulty?*

By selecting some persons of deep piety, sound judgment in divine things, and requesting them to meet the others; to converse, read, and pray with them, as they might be able.

7. *Give the history of Mr. Maxfield's preaching.*

As Mr. Wesley was about to leave London, he appointed Thomas Maxfield, one of the first converts in Bristol, to meet with the Foundry Society during his absence, pray with them, and by such means as were suitable for a layman, to encourage and advise them. Being fervent in spirit, and mighty in the Scriptures, he was insensibly led from praying and exhorting to preaching, his sermons being accompanied with such power that numbers were converted. Mr. Wesley, being informed of this irregularity, hastened to London to arrest it. His mother, on his arrival, seeing that something troubled him, inquired what it was, to which

he abruptly replied, "Thomas Maxfield has turned preacher, I find." His mother said, "John, take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him yourself." The Countess of Huntingdon also wrote: "Maxfield is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favor that I know. He is my astonishment. The first time I made him expound I expected little from him; but before he had gone over one fifth of his discourse my attention was riveted and I was immovable. His power in prayer is also very extraordinary."

8. *Did Mr. Wesley follow his mother's advice?*

He did, and was constrained to say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth to him good." From that time forward he accepted aid of such laymen as he believed God had qualified by the Holy Spirit for such public labor. This is the origin of lay

preaching, to which Methodism, under God, is so much indebted.

9. *Does it still seem to be necessary to have lay preachers?*

Notwithstanding that the ministry is greatly increased, the population has increased wonderfully, and there are places of ministerial usefulness to be occupied that it is not in the power of the regular clergy to supply. It was an element of power, the influence of which has been steadily increasing. Marvelous is the fact, that the very Church, which so branded Mr. Wesley for such a departure from Church order, realizing and appreciating the wonderfully beneficial results of this movement, are adopting it. In 1869 Dr. Jackson, bishop of London, in his own private chapel formally authorized eight laymen to read prayers, and to read and explain the Holy Scriptures, and to conduct religious services for the poor, in schools and mission rooms and in the open air, in the London diocese, with the understanding that their labors will be rendered gratuitously.

10. *What induced Mr. Wesley to form his followers into Societies?*

This was done, not because he designed to constitute a separate Church, but observing, where they were not thus formed, they soon relapsed into their former habits. He had been constrained to preach in the highways, and other unconsecrated places, by the closing of the churches against him; and he felt compelled to allow pious laymen to exhort, and even to preach, by the refusal of the regular clergy to watch over the souls of inquirers and give them such instruction as they needed. A little reflection also convinced him that this was the very course pursued from the beginning of Christianity.

11. *Give some account of the Itinerant system.*

The multiplication of Societies exceeded the increase of preachers. It thus became necessary that the latter should travel from town to town, and thence arose the itinerancy, one of the most important features of

the ministerial system of Methodism. While it has its disadvantages, it has the advantage of removing pastors without the friction which frequently occurs in other Churches, and of securing for pastors congregations, and for congregations pastors, without injurious absence or interruption.

12. *Give the origin of class-meetings.*

The Society at Bristol were devising means for the payment of a debt incurred in building their "Meeting-house." One of them suggested that every member should give a penny a week until the debt was paid. Another answered, "But many are poor and cannot afford to do it." "Then," said the first, "put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give any thing, well; I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you can call on eleven of your neighbors weekly, receive what they give, and make up what is wanting." It was done. After a while some of these collectors informed

Mr. Wesley, "that they found such and such a one did not live as he ought." He called together all the leaders of the classes, (as the collectors were called,) and requested them to make particular inquiry with regard to the behavior of those whom they saw weekly. They did so, and many disorderly walkers were detected, and thus the Society was purged of unworthy members.

13. *Did Mr. Wesley introduce this plan in London?*

1742. Yes, about six weeks afterward, as he had long found it difficult to become acquainted with all the members personally, he requested several earnest and sensible men to meet him, to whom he explained his difficulty. They all agreed, that to come to a sure, thorough knowledge of each member, there could be no better way, and thus, after an existence of three years, the Methodist Societies were divided into classes.

14. *What were the leaders required to do?*

To see each member of his class once a week; to inquire after the prosperity of their

souls; to advise, reprove, or exhort, as was found necessary; to receive what they wished to give for the relief of the poor; and to meet the ministers and stewards, as at the present time. At first the leaders visited the members at their own houses, but as this was found to be inconvenient, and in some cases impracticable, the members of each class met together once a week, and the leader was only required to visit those who might be absent.

15. *What does Mr. Wesley say with regard to the advantage of these meetings?*

He says: "It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped by this little prudential regulation. Many now experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to bear one another's burdens, and naturally to care for each other's welfare. Upon reflection, I could not but observe, this is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. As soon as any Jews or heathen were so convinced of

the truth as to forsake sin, and seek the gospel of salvation, the first preachers immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these catechumens, as they were called, apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with and for them, according to their several necessities."

16 *How are these meetings regarded in America?*

Though they are not so strictly a test of membership as in England, they are placed, by the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, among the means of grace, and attendance upon them is specified as a Christian duty.

17. *What is the usual order of service in these meetings?*

"Opening with singing and prayer, sometimes with reading of the Holy Scriptures. The leader then gives such general counsel and exhortation as he deems suitable, and speaks to the members of the class severally,

touching their religious experience. Each member is expected to take part in the exercise, either in the relation of experience or making such inquiries, or giving such counsel as may suit the occasion. Sometimes a special topic is selected, on which the members converse; or some duty is discussed in an informal way. By this Christian conversation, and by the variety and experience, many a sorrowful heart is comforted, many a doubt is removed, and a stronger and more vigorous type of Christian piety is cultivated."—*Cyclopedia of Methodism, Bishop Simpson.*

18. *When and where was the first Methodist watch-night held?*

On the last night of the year 1740, in Bristol, under the supervision of Mr. Wesley.

19. *How is a watch-night conducted?*

On the last night of every year this solemn service is held and continued until a little past twelve o'clock. It is usually commenced by singing and prayer, after which

the time is occupied in preaching, singing, exhortation, and prayer; sometimes the Lord's Supper is administered, and, not unfrequently, a part of the evening is devoted to love-feast exercises. A little before twelve o'clock all present are invited to kneel before God in silent prayer, and thus remain until the closing of the year, when the pastor, in vocal prayer, commends the congregation to the divine guidance and protection, and closes by singing, (usually the covenant hymn,) and the benediction. These meetings were originally held almost exclusively by the Methodists, but they have been introduced into some of the churches of other denominations.

20. *When were love-feasts begun among the Methodists, and how are they conducted?*

As early as 1737 Mr. Wesley joined with the Moravians in one of their "love-feasts." He introduced these meetings into the economy of Methodism, making them more simple, however, and more thoroughly religious. In them the members of the

church assemble once a quarter, and after singing, bread and water are passed around, of which each member is expected to partake, as an indication of fraternal love and of devotion to the cause of the Redeemer. This ended, one rises and testifies of the goodness of God. Others follow, as opportunity is afforded.

21. *What do we see in these peculiarities of Methodism?*

That they were of providential origin, springing out of the spiritual necessities of the pious and perishing sinners. There seems to have been no planning, no human ingenuity, no speculation. Mr. Wesley's plans were the plans of the Church of England. He knew no other, he wanted no other, till the necessity appeared, and the measure stood up before him like a real presence; and then he adopted it for the sake of the cause, though in doing so he had to depart from a long-cherished system of operations to which he had adhered with undeviating tenacity.

CHAPTER VI.

1. *What is said of the preaching of the word at this time by Mr. Wesley and his helpers?*

The preaching was attended with power. It was generally extemporaneous and directly adapted to the circumstances of the people, as the sermons of the other clergy were not. The hearers, even the low and despised, listened with astonishment, and regarding it as a message of God to them, made haste to "repent and be converted." Several soldiers of the British Army, who were converted, upon going into Germany, began to preach Jesus to the army, and great was the power of God that attended them.

2. *Did this growing cause meet with opposition?*

The same spirit that christened its early

friends "Methodists" at Oxford, found sympathy at other places. The clergy used their influence against it, refusing the preachers the use of their pulpits, and otherwise treating them as heretics and vagabonds. Mr. Wesley had been denied the privilege of preaching in the church at Epworth, where his father had been rector for forty years, and therefore preached on his father's tombstone to such a congregation as Epworth had never seen. Sermons had been preached denouncing the whole fraternity as a pestilent concern, that ought not to be tolerated.

3. *What effect did the example of the priests have upon the rabble?*

The new sect being every where spoken against by people of rank and religion, the rabble pursued them from place to place with sword in hand, and, but for the protection of Omnipotence, would have hurled them to oblivion.

4. *What happened in London?*

They were often attacked with showers

of stones; and once an attempt was made to unroof the "Foundry," where they were assembled. In different places mobs were summoned together by the sound of the horn; men, women, and children were abused in the most shocking manner, being beaten, stoned, and covered with mud. Their houses were broken open by any that pleased, and their goods spoiled or carried away.

5. *Did this opposition retard the work?*

Notwithstanding all this, which was accompanied with every other species of opposition which learning, wealth, prejudice, and power can give, by the peculiar blessing of Heaven, the work advanced with accumulating energy, achieving reforms among the lower classes that had been regarded as utterly impracticable.

6. *How did all this affect Mr. Wesley?*

He calmly pursued the path of duty, praying, preaching, visiting the sick and dying, forming Societies, building chapels, reading, writing, and publishing.

7. *For the first few years in Methodist history was there any special plan of circuit work?*

For several years the preachers traveled from place to place, as circumstances seemed to require, and as Mr. Wesley directed without any special plan. But as they became more numerous, and the work more extensive and complicated, it became necessary to divide the country into circuits, to be supplied by the different preachers, according to rules that might be adopted for that purpose.

8. *What did Mr. Wesley do to effect so difficult a task and secure the greatest possible success?*

Mr. Wesley invited several clergymen and lay assistants to meet him in London, and to give him "their advice respecting the best method of carrying on the work of God." And thus was called together the first Methodist Conference.

9. *Give an account of this Conference.*

It was held at the "Foundry," in London, commencing on Monday, June 25, 1744,

and lasted five days. It consisted of six ordained and four lay preachers. On Sunday, the day before the opening of Conference, besides the ordinary preaching services, a love-feast was held, and the sacrament was administered to the whole of the London Society, now numbering between two and three thousand members, six clergymen being present. The Conference was opened with prayer, asking God's guidance and blessing, followed by a sermon from Charles Wesley. Then the time was spent in the consideration of the great doctrinal and practical questions involved in their enterprise. The three points discussed were, 1. What to teach. 2. How to teach. 3. What to do; or, how to regulate our doctrine, discipline, and practice. This was the beginning of conferences, and lies at the foundation of that series of annual meetings of the preachers which has been extended to the present day.

10. *What did Mr. Wesley take occasion to do, as arrangements were more fully*

settled, and preachers assigned to particular fields of labor for a time?

To reason with the established clergy, attributing most of the persecutions the Societies were called upon to endure to ignorance and prejudice. Wishing to do it in a manner the least offensive, he drew up, in 1745, a short statement of the case, between the clergy and the Methodists.

11. *What three requests did Mr. Wesley make in this document?*

"1. That if any thing material be laid to our charge, we may be permitted to answer for ourselves. 2. That you would hinder your defendants from stirring up the rabble against us, who are certainly not the proper judges in these matters; and, 3. That you would effectually suppress and discountenance all riots and popular insurrections, which evidently strike at the foundation of all government, whether of Church or State."

12. *What general advice did Mr. Wesley give in talking to his own people?*

His advice to them was equally pertinent

and instructive. He says: "The first general advice which one who loves your souls would earnestly recommend to every one of you is, Consider, with deep and frequent attention, the peculiar circumstances wherein you stand. One of these is, that you are a new people. Your name is new, (at least as used in a religious sense,) not heard of till a few years ago, either in your own or any other nation. Your principles are new, in this respect, that there is no other set of people among us, (and possibly not in the Christian world,) who hold them all in the same degree and connection; who so strenuously and continually insist on the absolute necessity of universal holiness, both in heart and life, of a peaceful, joyous love of God, of a supernatural evidence of things not seen, of an inward witness that we are the children of God, and of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order to any good thought, word, or work. And, perhaps, there is no other set of people who lay so much, and yet no more, stress than you do on rectitude

of opinions, on outward modes of worship, and the use of those ordinances which you acknowledge to be of God; and yet do not condemn any man upon earth, merely for thinking otherwise than you do, much less to imagine that God condemns him for this, if he be upright and sincere of heart."

13. *How did Mr. Wesley describe their strictness of life?*

"Your strictness of life, taking the whole of it together, may likewise be accounted new. I mean your making it a rule to abstain from fashionable diversions; your plainness of dress; your manner of dealing in trade; your exactness in observing the Lord's day; your scrupulosity as to things that have not paid custom; your total abstinence from spirituous liquors, unless in cases of extreme necessity;) your rule not to mention the fault of an absent person, in particular of ministers, or of those in authority, may justly be termed new. For we do not find any body of people who insist on all these rules together."

14. *In giving his second advice, what did Mr. Wesley tell them not to imagine?*

"Do not imagine you can avoid giving offense. Your very name renders this impossible. And as much offense as you give by your name, you will give still more by your principles."

15. *How would they give offense to bigots?*

"You will give offense to the bigots *for* opinions, modes of worship, and ordinances, by laying no more stress upon them; to the bigots against them by laying so much."

16. *How to men of form, and moral men, and men of reason?*

"To men of form, by insisting so frequently and strongly on the inward power of religion; to moral men, (so-called,) by declaring the absolute necessity of faith in order to acceptance with God; and to men of reason, by talking of inspiration and receiving the Holy Ghost."

17. *How would they give offense to sinners generally?*

To drunkards, Sabbath breakers, common

swearers, and other open sinners, by refraining from their company, as well as by that disapprobation of their behavior which they would often be obliged to express.

18. *What must they do, therefore?*

Either they must consent to give up their principles, or their fond hope of pleasing men.

19. *What circumstances made their principles even more offensive?*

Their being united together made them more conspicuous, placing them more in the eye of men; and more dreadful to those of a fearful temper; and more odious to men of zeal, if their zeal be any other than fervent love to God and man.

20. *What is said of the attainments of the preachers at this time?*

They were not skilled beyond the first principles of religion, and the practical consequences deducible from them — repentance toward God, faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fruits that follow "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the

Holy Ghost." These were the subjects of their daily discourses, and these truths they knew in power.

21. *Why did it seem necessary to dwell on these first principles?*

On account of the low state of religious knowledge among the people, it was absolutely necessary to enforce these first principles, and to give them a practical influence on the heart and life, before they were led any further.

22. *What was the effect of the limited knowledge of the preachers?*

Under these circumstances, so far from being an inconvenience, it was an advantage, as it necessarily confined them to those fundamental points of experimental and practical religion which were best adapted to the state of the people. Their artless but earnest ministry secured the attention of the common people, and it was apparent that they wielded a wonderful power.

23. *How did the preacher often enforce*

upon his hearers the necessity of seeking by grace alone through a Redeemer?

By drawing a picture of human nature in such strong and natural colors, that every one who heard him saw his own likeness in it, and was ready to say, "He hath shown me all that was in my heart."

24. *What is said of the effect of such preaching?*

It was surprising; the people found themselves, under every discourse, emerging out of the thickest darkness into a region of light; realizing their own sinfulness in such a manner, they felt as if they were lost forever, but, depending upon Christ as their Saviour, light broke upon them, and they were led to rejoice.

25. *What did Mr. Wesley foresee?*

As knowledge increased among the people, it ought to be increased in the same, or even in a greater, proportion among the preachers, otherwise they would become less useful. He, therefore, began to think of a collection of such books in the English

language as might forward their improvement in treating of the various branches of practical divinity.

26. *With whom did Mr. Wesley consult on this subject?*

With Dr. Doddridge, who, with great courtesy, furnished the list of books desired.

27. *About this time what was inserted in "The Minutes" of the Conference for the benefit of the ministry?*

"Read the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly. Steadily spend all the morning in this employ, or, at least, five hours in the four-and-twenty."

28. *When one said he read only the Bible, what was Mr. Wesley's reply?*

"Then you ought to teach others to read only the Bible, and, by parity of reason, to hear only the Bible. But if so, you need preach no more. This is rank enthusiasm. If you need no other book but the Bible, you are got above St. Paul. He wanted others, too. 'Bring the books,' says he, 'but especially the parchments.'"

29. *If they said they had no taste for reading, what was his advice? and if they had no books, what did he offer?*

"Contract a taste for reading by use, or return to your trade. I will give each of you, as fast as you will read them, books to the value of five pounds. And I desire that the assistants would take care that all the large Societies provide our works, or at least the Notes, for the use of the preachers."

30. *What was one of Mr. Wesley's most important schemes for the promotion of religious knowledge?*

The compilation and publication of the "Christian Library." It consisted of extracts from and abridgments of the choicest works of practical divinity, beginning with translations of the Apostolic Fathers. He began it in 1749, and continued through fifty volumes. The entire work was reprinted in 1825, in thirty octavo volumes.

31. *To provide for the education of children, what did Mr. Wesley establish?*

In 1741 Mr. Wesley established the

Kingswood School, for the complete education of the young, where their morals would be secure. But afterward it became, step by step, exclusively a school for the education of sons of itinerant preachers, and so it continues to the present. He also projected schools for poor children at Newcastle and London.

32. *Give an incident which enabled Mr. Wesley to partly meet the expenses of his benevolent work.*

At one time he mentioned to Lady Maxwell his desire and design of erecting a Christian school, such as would not disgrace the Apostolic age. The lady was so well pleased with the idea, she put in his hands five hundred pounds toward it; and on learning, sometime afterward, that it was indebted three hundred pounds, she gave him the entire amount to pay the debt. What his unparalleled plan of finance did not secure in small sums among the poor, the providence of God supplied.

33. *Give an example of Mr. Wesley's*

"systematic beneficence" from his own history?

When his own income was but thirty pounds a year, he gave away two pounds; when it was sixty, he gave away thirty-two; when it reached one hundred and twenty, he kept himself to his old allowance, twenty-eight pounds, and gave away ninety-two pounds. It is estimated that he gave away in the course of his life more than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

34. *What was one of the most important questions asked at the first Conference?*

"Can we have a seminary for laborers?" Methodism was not yet sufficiently mature, especially in its finances, for the important design: the answer was, therefore, "If God spare us till another Conference."

35. *Did they continue to agitate the subject?*

The inquiry was made at subsequent Conferences, and never abandoned till it was effectively answered by the establishment of the present two well-endowed "Theological

Institutions" in England, and the three "Biblical Institutes" in America. Methodism commenced in a university, and has always, in its public capacity, zealously promoted useful knowledge and educational institutions. Objections to even theological education have been comparatively modern, and mostly personal.

CHAPTER VII.

1. *What had been accomplished within six years from the first Conference?*

Methodism had taken deep root among the colliers of Kingswood and Newcastle, the miners of Cornwall, the peasants of Yorkshire, and the drunken multitudes of Moorfields and Kennington Common; it had rescued scores of ignorant and corrupt men amid the vices of the camp and the terrors of battle. The Wesleys had visited Wales, Ireland, and the north of England; they had established their cause throughout the land, and it had already changed the moral aspect of much of the nation, elevating the most degraded classes of its population. Tens of thousands, rescued from virtual heathenism, blessed them as they passed along their ministerial routes; some

of their fiercest persecutors had become the most zealous Methodists. John Wesley, though preaching two or three times daily, beginning at five o'clock in the morning, traveling mostly on horseback, at the rate of five thousand miles a year, read continually as he journeyed, not only in theology, but still more in his favorite studies of history, antiquities, and the classic poets. Charles habitually indulged his love for lyric poetry, composing immortal odes as he rode along the highways from town to town, and mob to mob.

2. *What is said of the Wesleyan singing?*

It was a source of great power to early Methodism. Charles Wesley's hymns, with simple but effective tunes, spread everywhere among the Societies, and hundreds, who cared not for the preaching, were charmed to the Methodist assemblies by their music, and among such there were many wonderful conversions; thousands have been awakened and converted under it,

and have gone up to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

3. *What were Mr. Wesley's instructions with regard to singing?*

"Sing all," said he; "join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Sing lustily, and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep, but lift up your voice with strength. Above all, sing *spiritually*. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him; in order to do this attend strictly to what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually."

4. *What other difficulties did Mr. Wesley have to surmount besides those of poverty, unpopularity, mobs, etc?*

Calvinian controversy, secessions, and the question of separation from the Established Church.

5. *Did Mr. Wesley ever leave the Church of England?*

No, he did not leave that Church till he

was removed to the Church triumphant. The Societies he formed were parts of the Church, and aimed not at separation, but greater improvement in the knowledge and love of God.

6. *To what two classes of complainers did this expose Mr. Wesley?*

Those who thought he went *too far*, that after the people were converted he ought to leave them to the watchcare of their legal pastors, particularly where they were truly pious, and not organize them into Societies; and those who thought he did not go far enough, that he ought to secede and form an independent Church.

7. *What was his reason for not leaving his followers to the regular clergy?*

He thought it would prove fatal to their piety, as most of the clergy would treat them with derision.

8. *Why did he not form an independent Church?*

His reason was, not that none could be saved out of the Established Church, but

that he could better spread scriptural holiness over the land by remaining in it than by seceding from it; which was probably true at that time. Hence Mr. Wesley resisted every solicitation to closer adherence to the Church, or a greater departure from it.

9. *Did he require any thing as a condition of membership in his Societies which was inconsistent with his relations to the Church, or conformity to its lawful regulations?*

He held no service in the chapels during the time of regular service in the Church, but attended that service himself, and enjoined upon his followers to do the same. Nor would he allow the preachers to administer the sacraments, but required the members of the Societies to attend upon the sacraments in the Church. His preaching-places must not be called churches, but chapels; his helpers, not clergymen, but lay preachers; and the assemblies of his people, mere Societies.

10. *Did Mr. Wesley maintain this course without difficulty?*

No, nor without strong apprehensions that something like a separation would ultimately take place, as the repulsion of Methodists and Methodist preachers from the sacrament and the infliction of cruel persecution from a domineering priesthood created a general distrust of the piety of its incumbents, and a consequent disinclination to attend upon their ministry.

11. *What did he find it necessary to do?*

As there was a loud call for the sacraments, he found it necessary to administer them himself in some of the chapels, and to secure similar services from several of the regular clergy who were interested in his work.

12. *How did he express himself in a letter to a friend with regard to these seeming innovations?*

"Nor have we taken one step farther than we were convinced was our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of

this that we have, 1. Preached abroad. 2. Prayed extempore. 3. Formed Societies. 4. Permitted preachers who were not episcopally ordained. And were we pushed on this side, were there no alternative allowed, we should judge it our bounden duty, rather wholly to separate from the Church, than to give up any one of these points. Therefore, if we cannot stop a separation without stopping lay preachers, we cannot stop it at all."

13. *What did Mr. Wesley write afterward?*

"It is plain to me that the whole work of God, termed Methodism, is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore, I do not wonder if several things occur therein which do not fall under the ordinary rules of discipline."

14. *What two topics of interest came up in the Conference of* 1769?

Methodist missions, and the perpetuation of the Methodist system after Mr. Wesley's death.

15. *Give the thirteenth question at this Conference.*

"We have a pressing call from our brethren at New York, who have built a preaching-house, to come over and help them. *Question* 13. Who is willing to go? *Answer.* Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor. 2. What can we do further in token of our brotherly love? *Answer.* 'Let us now make a collection among ourselves.' This was immediately done, and out of it £50 was given toward the payment of the debt, and £20 to the brethren for their passage."

16. *Give the origin of Methodism in America?*

Four years before this, in 1765, a small number of Methodist emigrants from Ireland had landed in New York, one of them being Philip Embury, who had recived a local preacher's license. The next year, 1766, another Methodist family followed, of the name of Heck. Mrs. Barbara Heck, a cousin of Embury, was distressed to find that her predecessors had greatly declined

in godliness. At her request Philip Embury preached in "his own hired house" to a congregation of five persons, this being the first Methodist sermon delivered in America. Just as this time Capt. Webb, an officer in the English Army, who had been converted under Mr. Wesley, at Bristol, was constituted barrack-master at Albany. Hearing, on his arrival, of the little society in New York, he soon appeared in the midst of them in his regimentals; great interest was awakened, a chapel was built, a society was formed, and help was asked from England. After Boardman and Pilmoor arrived at Philadelphia, they found Capt. Webb, and a society of about a hundred members, to whom, and to thousands more, Pilmoor commenced preaching from the grand stand erected on the race-course. "At New York," Boardman says, "the chapel would contain about one thousand seven hundred hearers; and about a third part of the congregation got in, and the other two thirds were glad to hear without."

17. *Where and when was the first Methodist church in America dedicated?*

The old "John Street Church," in New York, was dedicated October 30, 1768, about thirty years after the birth of Methodism in England, and two years after its appearance in America.

18. *What question occupied Mr. Wesley's attention as he advanced in life?*

Being now three-score years and ten, though his health and strength remained undiminished, regarding his dissolution as near, he deliberately applied himself to provide for the government of the multitudes he had drawn around him. Who would take his place, and do his work, was a question which occupied not *his* attention only, but that of the preachers, who already trembled for the unity of the body when Mr. Wesley should be called to his reward.

19. *Whom did Mr. Wesley select as his successor?*

As Mr. Fletcher occupied a high place in the affections of the whole body of

Methodists, Mr. Wesley, in January, 1773, wrote him a very emphatic letter, urging him, by high consideration, to enter into the itinerant work, and be prepared to succeed him in office.

20. *Give some extracts from this letter?*

He writes: "What an amazing work God has wrought in less than forty years! And it not only continues, but increases throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland; nay, it has lately spread into New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Carolina. But the wise men of the world say, 'When Mr. Wesley drops, then all this is at an end.' But who is sufficient for these things? Qualified to preside both over the preachers and people, he must be a man of faith and love, and one that has a single eye to the advancement of the kingdom of God. But has God provided one so qualified? Who is he? *Thou art the man!* God has given you a measure of loving faith, and a single eye to his glory. But you will naturally say, 'I am not equal to the task'; I

have neither grace nor gifts for such an employment.' Who has? But do you not know Him who is able to give them? Perhaps not at once, but rather day by day; as each is, so shall your strength be. 'But this implies,' you may say, 'a thousand crosses, such as I feel I am not able to bear.' You are not able to bear them *now*, and they are not *now* come. Whenever they do come, will He not send them in due number, weight, and measure? And will they not all be for your profit that you may be a partaker of his holiness?"

21. *What was Mr. Fletcher's answer?*

Mr. Fletcher replied, with his usual modesty, declining the overture, but promising such assistance as he might be able to afford him in certain contingencies. Mr. Fletcher died six years before Mr. Wesley.

22. *Why has the year* 1784 *been called a critical year in the history of Methodism?*

1. In that year Mr. Wesley recorded in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery his famous "Deed of Declaration," which es-

tablished the legal settlement of the Conference, settling the question of authority and government. 2. He gave to American Methodism an Episcopal organization by ordaining a bishop, Dr. Coke, and two presbyters, Richard Whatcoat, and Thomas Vasey.

23. *What necessity was there for this Deed of Declaration?*

As yet there was no legal definition of what was meant by the term "Conference of the people called Methodists." It had not been an incorporated institution. To supply this defect Mr. Wesley executed this noted Deed. Its object was to explain the words, "*Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists*," and to declare "*what persons* are members of the said Conference, and how the *succession* and *identity* thereof is to be continued."

24. *What was this Deed?*

Mr. Wesley named one hundred preachers, who were to constitute the legal Conference after his death, making provisions for the filling of vacancies, occasioned by

death, superannuation, or expulsion, and defining their duties and powers, so as to secure the occupancy of the meeting houses, and other society property, to the Methodists, according to the original design, and preserve the itinerancy forever unimpaired among them.

25. *What has this instrument proved to be?*

The sheet-anchor of Mr. Wesley's incomparable plan, and the true interests of Methodism in every emergency. The necessity for such a constitution was obvious and absolute. The peculiar economy of Methodism could not otherwise proceed. It must cease to be itinerant, must subside into congregationalism, or else adopt some such organization as this. The Deed was sagaciously framed, and time has well proved its wisdom, and the results of the plan have demonstrated Mr. Wesley's prudent foresight.

26. *Give the details of the second important event of* 1784.

Methodism had spread rapidly in America,

notwithstanding the war of the Revolution. It now numbered eighty-three traveling preachers, besides hundreds of local preachers and about fifteen thousand members. Many of the English clergy, on whom the Methodist Societies had depended for the sacraments, had fled from the land, or had entered political or military life, and the Episcopal Church had been generally disabled. Under these circumstances the Methodists demanded of their preachers the administration of the sacraments, as many of the Societies had been months, some of them years, without them. The demand was not only urgent, it was logically right, but by the majority of the preachers it was not deemed expedient, therefore they exhorted their people to patiently wait until Mr. Wesley could be consulted. Mr. Wesley, appreciating their situation, importuned the authorities of the English Church in behalf of the Americans. He wrote to the Bishop of London, imploring ordination for a single preacher, that he might go to

America, travel among them as a presbyter, and give them the sacraments. But the request was denied, the bishop replying, "There are three ministers in that country already." "What are these," said Wesley, "to watch over all that extensive country? I mourn for poor America, for the sheep scattered up and down therein; part of them have no shepherds at all, and the case of the rest is little better, for their shepherds pity them not." After full consideration and earnest prayer, Mr. Wesley resolved to take the necessary steps for the organization of the Societies of America into a separate Church. Accordingly, with the assistance of several clergymen in England, he set apart Dr. Coke for the office of superintendent, ordaining him, according to the form for ordaining bishops in the Church of England. He also ordained two elders, Revs. Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, and sent them to America with Dr. Coke, to whom he gave directions to ordain Mr. Asbury as a joint superintendent.

27. *What did they do soon after their arrival in America?*

They arrived in America in November, and were joyfully received. Having conferred with Mr. Asbury and a number of the preachers, a Conference was convened in Baltimore, on Christmas, 1784; a Church was organized, by the unanimous consent of the preachers present, called the "Methodist Episcopal Church," and Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury were elected superintendents or bishops. Mr. Asbury was ordained by Dr. Coke, assisted by the elders, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, and also by Rev. Mr. Otterbein, of the German Reformed Church.

28. *Give a description of the early Methodist preachers.*

"What did they not dare? What did they not sacrifice? They were hunted and hooted by brutal mobs, they were pelted with stones, and driven from judgment-seats by faithless magistrates; they were branded with vile epithets and endungeoned in vile prisons; they were plunged in horse ponds,

and impressed by recruiting sergeants for foreign war; they braved the rigors of severe winters, and the perils of flood and forest; they slumbered on hardest pillows and housed in lowliest hovels. But in their work they were joyous; in their trials they were patient; in their homes they were contented; in their journeyings the woods echoed their songs; in their pulpits they had power with man; in their persecutions they prayed for their enemies; in their old age they testify they have not followed 'cunningly devised fables;' in their death hour they are borne up on their shields, 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.' And in their final home, 'These are they who came up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; thenceforth they are before the throne.'"—DR. GUARD.

29. *In one respect, how did the latter part of Mr. Wesley's life differ from the former?*

His early travels were constantly inter-

rupted by mobs and other persecutions, which not only embarrassed his work, but often endangered his life. But God permitted him to live to command the respect and veneration of his greatest enemies. His old age was honored with all the attention that was safe for any man to receive. The churches in London were generally closed against him in 1738; but now he had more applications to preach in those churches, for the benefit of public charities, than he could possibly comply with. His visits to many places in the country created a sort of general festival. The people crowded around him as he passed along the streets, the windows were filled with eager gazers, the children wanted 'to catch the good man's smile,' which the overflowing benignity of his heart rendered him ever willing to bestow.

30. *Give a description of the two visits at Cornwall and Falmouth, forty years apart.*

When he first went into Cornwall, accompanied by John Nelson, he plucked black-

berries from the hedges to allay the cravings of hunger, and slept upon boards, having his saddle bags for a pillow. Now, he was received as an angel of God. In 1789, visiting Falmouth, Mr. Wesley says: "The last time I was here, above forty years ago, I was taken prisoner by an immense mob, gaping and roaring like lions. But how is the tide turned! High and low now lined the street, from one end of the town to the other, out of stark love, gaping and staring as if the king were going by."

31. *After having secured the organization of Wesleyan Methodism, and the establishment of an independent Church in America, did Mr. Wesley retire from his work?*

No, he continued his labors, journeying and writing, after this as before, without much interruption of health till March 2, 1791, when he departed this life in glorious hope of a blissful immortality, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, and the sixty-fourth of his ministry, leaving five hundred and

fifty itinerant ministers, besides thousands of local preachers, and one hundred and forty thousand communicants in the United Kingdom, the British Provinces, the United States, and the West Indies, all cherishing the same faith, enjoying the same religion, and walking by the same rules.

32. *Give the grand total of Methodists and Missions in* 1883.

There are 33,385 itinerant ministers, 77,935 local preachers, and 5,094,564 lay members.*

33. *Give Dr. Guard's description of the present position of Methodism.*

"Of the present position of Methodism, as to the numbers reached by her ministry the world over, we have often heard. Some thirteen millions listen to her ministrations of truth, and share in her pastoral oversight. The sun sets not on her dominion. Her people are found in every land, and abide in every zone. All climates embrace them—the winters of Hudson's

* "Methodist Year-Book," 1884.

Bay and the suns of India play and beat upon them. They locate in forests, and they throng the marble city. Pacific waves ripple upon their shores, and peaks crowned with eternal snow fling their shadows o'er their dwellings. She is in her second century; and yet no wrinkle upon her brow, nor haze in her vision, nor stoop in her form, nor halt in her step gives sign of wasted energy and declining vigor. Still her sanctuaries are Bethesdas, and her prayer-meetings Bethels. Still she gathers in the street Arab, and sends her missionaries to Orient fields of toil and death. She multiplies her places of worship at the rate of two for every day of the year. Her doctrines are to-day as when Wesley died; her philanthropy is as broad, her relations to other Churches as catholic, as when Wesley said, 'The world is my parish, and we are the friends of all, the enemies of none.' The world needs her; and she shall not perish! The Churches need her; and she shall not perish! She believes still in conversion;

and she shall not perish! She still holds forth Christ crucified; and she shall not perish! She still believes in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life; and she shall not perish! Baptized into the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, she shall move forth resplendent with every virtue; all aglow with 'the dew of her youth;' bright as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners! And having conquered a world for her Divine Head, and as she reposes within the mild splendors of the latter-day glory, even angels, as they bend o'er the scene, shall exclaim, 'How lovely are thy tents and thy dwellings, O people; the little one has become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation; I the Lord have done it for mine own name's sake.'"

Wesley's Last Text and Final Utterances.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near."

—*Wesley's text for his* LAST SERMON.

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures."

"To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree."

—*Wesley's* LAST SONG *on earth.*

"The best of all is, God is with us."

"We thank thee, O Lord, for these and all thy mercies. Bless the Church and king, and grant us truth and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever."

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge! Pray and praise!"

"Farewell."

—*The* LAST WORDS *of John Wesley.*

ARTICLES OF RELIGION.

GENERAL RULES.

BAPTISMAL AND CHURCH COVENANTS.

ARTICLES OF RELIGION.

1. *What is the meaning of the words, "Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church?"*

It is the title of a book containing the doctrines, usages, government, and ritual of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

2. *Why is it desired that it may be found in the house of every Methodist?*

We ought, next to the Holy Scriptures, to understand the Articles of Religion and the rules of the Church to which we belong. Far from wishing any to be ignorant of the doctrines, or any part of the Discipline, it is desired that they read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the whole. Again, it contains the Articles of Faith maintained, more or less, in part or in whole, by every Christian Church in the world.

3. *What obligation does the fact of our being in the Church imply?*

It "implies an obligation to conform to her Discipline. But we are under more than an implied obligation. We promised, as a condition of being admitted to full membership, in presence of the Church assembled, to observe and keep her rules. And now consistency requires it, and the people, both *in* and *out* of the Church, expect us to keep our pledge. To violate it would involve our reputation and peace of mind."—*Bishop Morris.*

4. *How is the Discipline divided?*

Into six parts: Part I. Origin, Doctrines, and Rules. Part II. Government of the Church. Part III. Administration of Discipline. Part IV. Educational and Benevolent Institutions. Part V. Temporal Economy. Part VI. Ritual of the Church.

5. *What were our Articles of Religion taken from, and how are they divided?*

They were abridged and slightly altered from the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church

of England. They are divided into twenty-five sections.

6. *Give Articles* I, II, III, IV, *and* V *of our faith.*

I. *Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.*—There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

II. *Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very Man.*—The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to

reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

III. *Of the Resurrection of Christ.*—Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

IV. *Of the Holy Ghost.*—The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

V. *The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.*—The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those

canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church. The names of the canonical books are—

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First Book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings, The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, the Book of Esther, the Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes or the Preacher, Cantica or Songs of Solomen, Four Prophets the greater, Twelve Prophets the less.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

7. *Give Articles* VI. *and* VII.

VI. *Of the Old Testament.*—The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ,

who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

VII. *Of Original or Birth Sin.*—Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

8. *Give Articles* VIII, IX, X, *and* XI.

VIII. *Of Free Will.*—The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he

cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, [surrounding us and leading us,] that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

IX. *Of the Justification of Man.*—We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

X. *Of Good Works.*—Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as

evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

XI. *Of Works of Supererogation.*—Voluntary works—besides, over, and above God's commandments—which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

9. *Give Articles* XII, XIII, XIV, *and* XV.

XII. *Of Sin after Justification.*—Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by

the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here; or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

XIII. *Of the Church.* — The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

XIV. *Of Purgatory.*—The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshiping and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the word of God.

XV. *Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People understand.*—It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in

the Church, or to minister the sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people,

10. *Give Articles* XVI, XVII, XVIII, *and* XIX.

XVI. *Of the Sacraments.*—Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm, our faith in him.

There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they

have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily [reverently or considerately] receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily, [irreverently or inconsiderately] purchase to themselves condemnation, as Paul saith, 1 Cor. xi, 29.

XVII. *Of Baptism.*—Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

XVIII. *Of the Lord's Supper.*—The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly,

worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

XIX. *Of both Kinds.*—The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike.

11. *Give Articles* XX, XXI, *and* XXII.

XX. *Of the one Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross.*—The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick [living] and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit.

XXI. *Of the Marriage of Ministers.*—The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

XXII. *Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches.*—It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the

same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the Church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular Church [denomination] may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

12. *Give Articles* XXIII, XXIV, *and* XXV.

XXIII. *Of the Rulers of the United States of America.*—The President, the Congress, the General Assemblies, the Gov-

ernors, and the Councils of State, *as the delegates of the people*, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them, by the Constitution of the United States, and by the Constitutions of their respective States. And the said States are a sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

XXIV. *Of Christian Men's Goods.*—The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

XXV. *Of a Christian Man's Oath.*—As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle; so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and

charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

THE GENERAL RULES.

13. *Give the rise of the United Society, first in Europe, and then in America.*

In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together; which from

thenceforward they did every week, namely, on *Thursday*, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased daily,) he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them; and they always concluded their meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

14. *What is a Methodist Society?*

A company of men having the form and seeking the power of *godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.*

15. *That this may more easily be discerned, how is each Society divided?*

Into classes about twelve to each class, one of whom is styled the leader; who is to meet them once a week for religious inquiry and conversation.

16. *What is previously required of those who desire admission to these Societies?*

Only one condition—a desire to flee from

the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins. But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits.

17. *How is this desire of salvation to be shown first?*

By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced; such as,

1.) The taking the name of God in vain.

2.) The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling.

3.) Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

4.) Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.

5.) Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.

6.) The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

7.) The giving or taking things on usury, that is, unlawful interest.

8.) Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.

9.) Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

10.) Doing what we know is not for the glory of God; as,—the putting on of gold and costly apparel.

11.) The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

12.) The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

13.) Softness and needless self-indulgence.

14.) Laying up treasure upon earth.

15.) Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

18. *How is this desire of salvation to be shown secondly?*

By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:

1.) *To their bodies* of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

2.) To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good unless *our hearts be free to it.*"

3.) By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own and them *only.*

4.) By all possible *diligence* and *frugality*, that the Gospel be not blamed.

5.) By running with patience the race which is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily;* submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say *all man-*

ner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.

19. *How is this desire for salvation to be shown thirdly?*

By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are,

1.) The public worship of God.

2.) The ministry of the word, either read or expounded.

3.) The Supper of the Lord.

4.) Family and private prayer.

5.) Searching the Scriptures.

6.) Fasting or abstinence.

BAPTISMAL AND CHURCH COVENANTS.

20. *What are the conditions of membership into the Methodist Episcopal Church?*

In order to prevent improper persons from insinuating themselves into the Church,—

Let no one be received into the Church until such person has been at least six months on trial, and has been recommended by the Leaders and Stewards' Meeting, and has been baptized, and shall, on examination by the minister in charge before the Church, give satisfactory assurances both of the correctness of his faith and of his willingness to observe and keep the rules of the Church. Nevertheless, if a member in good standing in any other orthodox Church

shall desire to unite with us, such applicant may, by giving satisfactory answers to the usual inquiries, be received at once into full fellowship.

21. *In order to be more exact in receiving and excluding members, what is done?*

The preacher in charge shall, at every Quarterly Meeting, read the names of those that are received into the Church, and also those that are excluded therefrom.

22. *What is meant by probationers?*

Probationers are those who have made application for membership—their names are enrolled on the class books and on the records of the Church as probationers. They have all the privileges of the various means of grace, and at the end of six months, having acquainted themselves with the Discipline of the Church and with its doctrines, and the Church having become acquainted with the life and habits of the candidates, if approved, they are recommended by the leaders' meetings to be received into full connection.

23. *What do they do if they desire admission at the end of their probation?*

They come before the Church, answer before the congregation questions touching their faith and their approval of the economy of the Church, and are then received by a simple yet solemn ceremony into full membership.

24. *How may the baptismal vow be summarized?*

In three words, namely, 1.) *Renunciation.* 2.) *Faith.* 3.) *Obedience.*

25. *Repeat the first part of the baptismal vow.*

Renunciation.—I renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that I will not follow nor be led by them.

26. *Repeat the second part of the baptismal vow.*

Faith.—I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only-begotten Son our

Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day he rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; and from thence shall come again at the end of the world, to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic [or universal] Church, the communion of saints, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the body, and everlasting life after death.

27. *Give the third part.*

Obedience.—I will obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and will walk in the same all the days of my life, God being my helper.

28. *Repeat the Church covenant.*

Here, in the presence of God and of this congregation, I renew the solemn promise contained in the baptismal covenant, ratifying and confirming the same, and acknowl-

edging myself bound faithfully to observe and keep it. I here profess saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe in the doctrines of Holy Scripture, as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I will cheerfully be governed by the rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, hold sacred the ordinances of God, and endeavor, as much as in me lies, to promote the welfare of my brethren and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. I will contribute of my earthly substance, according to my ability, to the support of the Gospel and the various benevolent enterprises of the Church.

29. *What are the regular Benevolent Collections of the Church?*

There are seven: 1.) Missions. 2.) Superannuated Preachers. 3.) Church Extension. 4.) Sunday-School Union. 5.) Tract Society. 6.) Freedmen's Aid. 7.) Education.

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